



St. Peter's C.E. Junior School

Stilwell Close, Yateley, Hampshire GU46 6XH.

<i>Policy Number:</i> GB/1/May09	<i>Date Agreed:</i> 14 th May 2009
<i>Policy Title:</i> COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE	<i>Authorised By:</i> <u>J.H.Divall</u>
<i>Area:</i> Governing Body	<i>Due for Review:</i> May 2010
<p><i>The Governing Body believes that fairness and consistency of judgement is essential to the operation of the school. All members of the school have equality of opportunity to achieve their full potential and will not be discriminated against because of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, race, or religion. The Governing Body believes that the school always has to be aware of the potential for unconscious discrimination, to avoid assumptions about individual members of the school based on stereotypes and to use the teaching and learning arrangements actively to encourage everyone to achieve their full potential.</i></p> <p><i>All our policies are consistent with our duty of care to protect our pupils and to provide a learning environment which is safe and healthy.</i></p> <p><i>In all our dealings, we respect the strict code of confidentiality that underpins our school ethos.</i></p>	

St Peter's School has a staged procedure for dealing with complaints about general school matters or about the National Curriculum, Religious Education or related matters, in line with Hampshire County Council (HCC) guidelines.

Parents may use this complaints procedure if it is believed that the school's governing body or HCC are failing to:

- Provide the National Curriculum in the school for their child
- Follow the law on charging for school activities, such as school trips
- Provide daily collective worship (in the Anglican tradition) and religious education
- Provide information that parents may require
- Carry out any other statutory duty in relation to the curriculum
- Act reasonably in all the above cases

Preliminary Stage - informal Approach

As a school, we value our relationship with parents and carers of pupils. Consequently, we offer a range of opportunities during the school year for parents to discuss any concerns regarding their child's progress and well-being, or our arrangements for learning.

Occasionally, concerns may arise at other times, and in this case parents should contact the school straight away and ask to discuss the matter with the appropriate member of staff. The majority of concerns are normally resolved quickly and effectively in this way.

Stage 1 - Headteacher

If the matter is not resolved informally, parents should write to the Headteacher or telephone for an appointment to discuss their concern. The Headteacher will consider the complaint and respond appropriately. In most cases, we hope the complaint will be dealt with satisfactorily at this stage.

Stage 2 - Chair of Governors

If discussions with the Headteacher do not resolve the complaint, parents may write formally to the Chair of Governors, via the school address, who will review the issues and the Headteacher's response. The Chair of Governors will then inform the complainant of their conclusions and try to resolve the concerns.

Stage 3 - The Governing Body's Complaints Panel

If a parent remains dissatisfied with the outcomes and wishes to pursue a complaint further, they may request that the governing body's Complaints Panel hears the case. The request should be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body, via the school address, and should include information about the:

- Nature of the original complaint
- Steps taken by the Headteacher or designated member of staff to deal with the matter
- Headteacher's response
- Chair of Governor's response
- Reasons for pursuing the complaint beyond the Chair of Governors

The Clerk will notify HCC of the parent's request and copy the relevant information to the Customer Relations and Complaints Adviser at HCC.

The Complaints Panel Meeting:

The Clerk will arrange the meeting within 21 days of the request and inform the parents about the process and agenda. The Complaints Panel consists of three governors with no previous involvement in the matter. Parents will be given the opportunity to submit additional supporting information prior to the meeting. The panel will then meet with all parties to consider both written and oral submissions.

Example Agenda:

1. Introductions
2. Oral submission by the complainant
3. Questions from the school
4. Oral response by the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors
5. Questions by the complainant
6. Brief summary by the complainant, with no new information
7. Brief summary by the school, with no new information

Parents will then be notified of the panel's decision in writing within the stated timescale.

Stage 4 - The Education Department of HCC or Winchester Diocese

If a parent is not satisfied with the decision of the governors' Complaints Panel about matters listed at the beginning of this document, they may appeal to HCC. The letter of complaint should include copies of information submitted to the governor's Complaints Panel and the panel's decision letter and explain the reason for appealing to HCC. The letter should be sent to:

Customer Relations and Complaints Adviser
County Education Office
The Castle
Winchester SO238UG

HCC will acknowledge the request within 5 days and arrange for a panel of elected Members of the Schools' Monitoring Panel to consider written submissions within 20 days of the date of the request. Members of the panel will have had no recent involvement with the school. The HCC panel may request relevant information from the Education Department. Parents will have the opportunity to submit additional information in support of their complaint. HCC will inform parents of their decision within 7 days of the panel meeting.

As we are a church school, any complaints relating to the religious education and collective worship should be discussed with the Education Department, Winchester Diocese (01962 624767). The department will arrange a panel of three people who have had no previous involvement or connection with the school. As with HCC, the Diocese will consider the submission within 20 days and inform parents of their decision within 7 days of the meeting.